The Religious Public Relations Council, Inc.

April 27, 1982

Irv Drasnin
By The Press And The Public Project
One Lincoln Plaza
New York, New York 10023

Dear Mr. Drasnin:

On behalf of the Religious Public Relations Council and The Wilbur Awards Committee, I would like to share with you the enclosed copy of our Press Release about your award.

Also enclosed is an extract of the judges comments stating why you were cited for excellence in the Communication of Religious Values.

Congratulations,

Robert L. Schafer, Jr.
Co-ordinator for Wilbur Awards Chairman,
President of Central Indiana Chapter of R.P.R.C.

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N E W S - National Convention 1982
Religious Public Relations Council
Essex Hotel, Indianapolis, Indiana
April 21-23 - Phone (317) 639-4501 I-4

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. -- Former State Department press aide Hodding Carter III won one of nine "Wilbur" awards given here April 22 for outstanding work with religious themes in press, radio and television during 1981.

Carter was honored by the Religious Public Relations Council for a PBS program he anchored in which various sides were presented in the controversy over sex/violence and censorship on television.

Carter and producers Ned Schnurman and Irv Drasnin of "Eye of the Beholder" were cited by judges for "skillful interviewing and editing" and an impartial approach.

The program included interviews with the Rev. Jerry Falwell of the Moral Majority, the Rev. Donald Wildmon of the Coalition for Better Television as well as executives of ABC, CBS and NBC television. It was one program of the series "Inside Story," for which Carter is chief correspondent and which is termed the first nationally-televised weekly series on press performance.

The Wilbur awards were given at the 53rd national convention of the Religious Public Relations Council, a professional association of communications people who work for Protestant, Catholic and Jewish organizations and institutions. The awards are named for Dr. Marvin Wilbur, volunteer executive secretary of the organization and an executive of the United Presbyterian Foundation, New York City.

Also honored with Wilburs along with Carter and PBS were:

-- Media Action Resource Center, Shirley Strucheon, media coordinator, for development of the curriculum, "Growing With Television."

-- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, Jim Hartley, creative supervisor, for a local media campaign in print, radio and TV called "Perspectives."

-- Presbyterian Media Mission, Pittsburgh, Pa., for a local campaign produced by Dennis Benson in TV, newspapers, study materials, buttons and bumper stickers and called "The Circle of Hope."

-- Managing Editor Michael G. Doll of the Binghamton, N.Y., Evening Press for an "innovative" new weekly newspaper section dealing with major ethical and religious issues.

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-- Staff writer Steve Maynard of the Walla Walla, Wash., Union Bulletin for "Faith Behind Bars," a series on religious programs for people in confinement.

-- Mennonite Board of Missions/Media Ministries, for what was described as an amusing series of radio spots entitled "Living More With Less."

-- Archdiocese of Miami's Radio and TV Center, for a video magazine segment called "Creole Understood."

-- WFAA-TV, Dallas, Texas, religion editor Peggy Wehmeyer, for a "superbly executed" religion news series.

The religious PR group additionally gave "Awards of Merit" for five other efforts in treating religion on and in media. They were:

-- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, for a series of three advertisements in the Reader's Digest, "The Well-Known Secret of Happiness," "Let Us Join in Praise of Jesus Christ," and "I Will See You Again."

-- George Bullard, region writer of the Detroit News, for general reporting of religion with "great sensitivity" and a "finely-tuned sense of fairness."

-- Religion writer John Workman of the Arkansas Gazette, Little Rock, for a series of editorials on religious values in which he "made valuable comment while avoiding the dangers of ax-grinding, partisanship or pretentious moralizing."

-- Senior writer Kenneth L. Woodward of Newsweek magazine, for his coverage of the secular humanism controversy in an article entitled "The Right's New Bogeyman."

-- KVOS-TV of Bellingham, Wash., for a half hour special by Nancy Field on "The Quitting Clergy."

Tonight we heard the opinions of Mr. R. K. Shull on the merit of the media, particularly the merits of television. Other groups in America have voiced opinions on this subject, too, and none of them more strongly or virulently than those groups which back their opinions with religious convictions. A fair treatment of the convictions that lead to attacks on your own medium is a tough job at best, but one which our next winners accomplished in an outstanding manner. In the national television or cable category, RPRC is pleased to present a Wilbur Award to the Press and the Public Project, for "Eye of the Beholder," "Inside Story: Special Edition" for the Corportion for Public Broadcasting, Chief correspondent Hodding Carter III, executive producer Ned Schnurman, and senior producer Irv Drasnin.

In announcing their selection, the jury said,
"Eye of the Beholder" treated the issues of television morality and censorship in so just a way as to let each of a number of wildly varying viewpoints be presented fairly. The skillful interviewing and editing showed the strange bedfellows protected by the First Amendment, illustrated the ironic difficulties of deciding what constitutes morality, and yet remained so impartial as to qualify as an example of excellence in communication of religious values."